

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 08124 01 OF 02 091518Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
SY-05 A-01 OPR-02 OC-06 CCO-00 DHA-02 ACDA-07
AID-05 PC-01 CU-04 USSS-00 SCA-01 OMB-01 MCT-01
ERDA-05 NRC-05 OES-07 IO-13 /129 W
-----052085 091523Z /46

O 091127Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3291
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMCONSUL KARACHI IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL LAHORE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 8124

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y T E X T

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJECT: LARGE CROWDS AND VIOLENCE GREET BHUTTO IN LAHORE

1. FORMER PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO'S AUGUST 8 ARRIVAL IN LAHORE WAS MARKED BY TUMULTUOUS CROWDS, VIOLENCE IN THE STREETS, STRIDENT "REVOLUTIONARY" RHETORIC LADEN WITH ANTI-AMERICAN ALLEGATIONS FROM THE PPP CHAIRMAN, AND A PNA CALL FOR A STRIKE.

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2. IN A RECEPTION WHICH MOCKED MARTIAL LAW REGULATIONS AGAINST POLITICAL RALLIES, OVER 10,000 PPP SUPPORTERS GATHERED AT LAHORE AIRPORT, BEGINNING AT 2 P.M. TO GREET BHUTTO. POLICE MADE SEVERAL LATHI CHARGES AND USED TEAR GAS IN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO CLEAR THE CROWDS. HE ARRIVED FROM MULTAN AT 1915 HOURS, WAVED TO HIS SUPPORTERS, AND WAS WHISKED OFF BY POLICE TO HOME OF

FORMER CHIEF MINISTER QUERESHI. CONGEN LAHORE REPORTS CROWD BECAME UNRULY AND MANHANDLED PAKISTANI JOURNALISTS (FOR NOT GIVING BHUTTO MORE COVERAGE IN THEIR PAPERS), THE BBC AND REUTERS CORRESPONDENTS AND SOME FOREIGN TOURISTS. THE POLICE DID NOT INTERVENE, BUT APPARENTLY NO ONE WAS INJURED.

3. LAHORE REPORTS THAT LARGE CROWDS OF PPP SUPPORTERS ALSO GATHERED THROUGHOUT THE AFTERNOON ALONG THE MALL AND MAJOR ROADS NEAR THE AIRPORT; ONE GAS STATION WAS ROBBED AND BURNED. PPP ROWDIES ROUGHED UP SEVERAL PROMINENT PNA LEADERS WHO WERE IN THE AREA, INCLUDING JUP PRESIDENT MAULANA NOORANI AND FORMER PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER HANEEF RAMAY. A TEHRIK (ASGHAR KHAN'S PARTY) STUDENT LEADER WAS SEVERELY BEATEN, AND THE PRESS REPORTS A TOTAL OF NINE PEOPLE INJURED.

3. BHUTTO STRUCK TWO THEMES WHEN HE SPOKE WITH REPORTERS AND PPP WORKERS AT QUERESHI'S RESIDENCE EARLY IN THE EVENING - THE PARTY'S "REVOLUTIONARY" CHARACTER AND THE DESIGNS OF FOREIGN POWERS. WITH A SLAP AT THE PNA, HE SAID THAT ONLY A "POPULAR GOVERNMENT" ELECTED BY THE PEOPLE'S VOTE COULD FUNCTION AND NOT ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT "BACKED BY THE IMPERIALIST POWERS." HE ADDED THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR A MOVEMENT BUT A REVOLUTION. BHUTTO IMPLICITLY ACCUSED THE UNITED STATES OF PLOTTING AGAINST HIS LIFE BY STATING THAT HE KNEW HIS LIFE WAS IN DANGER AND "A FOREIGN POWER HAD A HAND IN IT." HE ALSO STATED THAT HE WOULD NOT ALLOW A SOVEREIGN PAKISTAN TO BECOME THE 52ND (SIC)
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STATE OF THE US, AND WOULD CRUSH "THE CONSPIRACY OF JEWS AND THEIR STOOGES AGAINST PAKISTAN."

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AID-05 PC-01 CU-04 USSS-00 SCA-01 OMB-01 MCT-01
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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 8124

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y PARAS 6 & 7

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

5. THE REPROCESSING PLANT ISSUE WAS HIGHLIGHTED WHEN BHUTTO STATED "ALL THIS TURMOIL IS OVER THE NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PLANT. AS A FREE NATION WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO HAVE IT." HE ALSO NOTED THAT HE WAS "SURPRISED" TO HEAR OF THE VISIT OF JOSEPH NYE, "SPECIAL NUCLEAR ADVISER TO PRESIDENT CARTER", WHO HAD BEEN IN ISLAMABAD FOR THREE DAYS "BUT THERE WAS NO MENTION OF HIS PRESENCE IN ANY NEWSPAPER." HE COMPARED THIS WITH THE EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE GIVEN NYE'S DELHI VISIT AND SAID THAT "THIS
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INDICATES HOW THE FOREIGN CONSPIRACY IS WORKING AGAINST PAKISTAN."

6. THE PNA'S VERBAL RESPONSE TO BHUTTO WAS SWIFT AND POINTED. PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL GHAFOR AHMED SAID THAT BHUTTO WANTED TO "CREATE A CIVIL WAR SITUATION" AND CALLED FOR A STRIKE AUGUST 10 IN LAHORE TO PROTEST AGAINST THE "HOOLIGANISM OF BHUTTO'S MEN." BHUTTO LATER ANNOUNCED HE INTENDS TO VISIT A POPULAR SHRINE IN THE HEART OF THE CONGESTED OLD CITY AT 1300 HOURS AUGUST 10.

7. BHUTTO HAS PUBLICLY THROWN DOWN THE GAUNTLET TO THE MARTIAL LAW AUTHORITIES. THE MILITARY DID NOT INTERVENE IN LAHORE YESTERDAY, EVEN THOUGH THEY MUST HAVE REALIZED BY MID-AFTERNOON THAT THE POLICE COULD NOT HANDLE THE SITUATION. THERE ARE SEVERAL POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THE ARMY'S PASSIVITY. SOME CONTEND THAT LAHORE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL IQBAL - ONE OF THOSE REPORTEDLY ADVOCATING BHUTTO'S ARREST AND TRIAL - REFRAINED FROM CONTROLLING THE SITUATION SO BHUTTO WOULD TAKE ENOUGH ROPE TO HANG HIMSELF. OTHERS NOTE THAT THE MLA IS VERY HESITANT TO

ENGAGE TROOPS IN POLITICAL DISORDERS, AN ADDITIONAL FACTOR WHICH MAY HAVE MADE THE MILITARY HESITATE. A MORE SINISTER SPECULATION IS THAT GENERAL IQBAL IS OPPOSED TO OCTOBER ELECTIONS AND WANTS A SITUATION TO DEVELOP WHICH WOULD JUSTIFY AN EXTENSION OF MARTIAL LAW.

8. WHATEVER THE REASON, THE MILITARY IS NOW FACED WITH A DIFFICULT POLITICAL CHOICE, AND ONE WHICH THEY MAY NOT HAVE THE POLITICAL ACUMEN AND SAVVY TO HANDLE. BHUTTO'S SPEECH AND WELCOME, AS WELL AS THE PNA'S STRIKE CALL, ARE CLEARLY IN CONTRAVENTION OF MARTIAL LAW REGULATIONS. THEY AS WELL AS BHUTTO'S AUGUST 10 PLAN, HAVE CLEARLY CHALLENGED THE MLA'S DESIRE TO HAVE A "COOLING-OFF" PERIOD BEFORE THE CAMPAIGN STARTS. THEY HAVE SPOTLIGHTED A FACT WHICH HAS CONCERNED POLITICAL OBSERVERS HERE SINCE JULY

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FIFTH - THE MILITARY MOST PROBABLY UNDERSTIMATES THE POLITICAL PASSIONS EXTANT IN PAKISTAN AND THE DIFFICULTY OF HOLDING FAIR AND FREE ELECTIONS IN A PEACEFUL ATMOSPHERE.

9. IF THE MLA REACTS STRONGLY, AND PUTS BHUTTO AND OTHER POLITICAL LEADERS BACK IN CUSTODY, BHUTTO COULD WELL BOYCOTT THE ELECTIONS. (SOME EVEN CONTEND HE IS FORCING A CONFRONTATION SO HE HAS AN EXCUSE TO BOYCOTT.) AN ELECTION WITHOUT THE PPP WOULD BE QUESTIONED AND WOULD STRENGTHEN THOSE WHO ADVOCATE A LONGER PERIOD OF MILITARY RULE. IF THE MLA DOES NOT REACT FIRMLY, HOWEVER, ITS STRENGTH WILL BE BELITTLED, ITS ABILITY TO CONTROL THE SITUATION WILL BE CALLED INTO QUESTION, AND VIOLENCE MAY SPREAD.

HUMMEL

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Message Attributes

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